

I'm in the Lord's Army

Ephesians 6:10-20

INTRODUCTION

- A. Children love to sing, "I may never march in the infantry, Ride in the cavalry, Shoot the artillery, I may never soar o'er the enemy, But I'm in the Lord's army."
- B. As that song implies that Christianity is like being in battle; indeed Christianity is often compared to warfare.
 - 1. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds" (1 Cor. 10:4).
 - 2. Paul wrote to Timothy about the prophecies made about him that he might "wage the good warfare" (1 Tim. 1:18).
 - 3. "Fight the good fight of faith" (1 Tim. 6:12).
- C. Christianity is a fight.
 - 1. Satan bombards the Christian with temptation.
 - 2. The Christian is to stand firm against these temptations.
 - 3. The way we overcome Satan is to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, v. 10.
 - a. We are to be strong in the Lord.
 - b. The way we become strong in Lord is to put on the armor of God.

THE PURPOSE FOR THE ARMOR, vv. 11-12

- A. We are to put on God's armor so we can stand against the wiles of the devil, v. 11.
 - 1. A "wile" refers to scheming, craftiness.
 - 2. Satan has many schemes he uses against the Christian.
 - a. He deceived Eve in the Garden--He can deceive us as to the consequences of sin.
 - b. He caused Peter to deny the Lord because of fear--He can cause us to be fearful as well.
 - c. He used lust to conquer David--He can cause us to be lustful as well.
- B. Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, v. 12.
 - 1. The struggle we face is from demonic sources.
 - 2. Principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness, spiritual hosts of wickedness probably refers to a hierarchy of demons.
- C. We need to understand that this struggle is real--we are involved in a real, cosmic battle.

THE PLACEMENT OF THE ARMOR, vv. 13-17

- A. We should not at all be surprised that Paul uses the imagery of a soldier's armor.
 - 1. Paul wrote this epistle from prison.
 - 2. Daily Paul had to stare at a soldier's armor.
- B. We must take up the whole armor of God, v. 13.
 - 1. Paul twice encourages us to take up all of God's armor, vs. 11, 13.
 - a. This emphasizes that we can leave no part of our armor undone.
 - b. If we leave off part of the armor, Satan will have a much easier attack.
 - 2. This is the armor of God. God provides this armor to his people.
 - 3. Wearing this armor will allow us to stand on the evil day. The evil day is any day that Satan comes and attacks us.
- C. We are to stand--this would be the position ready to fight.
- D. We to gird our waists with truth, v. 14.
 - 1. The belt was used to hold the soldier's clothing next to his body; this kept his clothing from flapping about as he ran.
 - 2. The belt we are to use is truth.
 - a. God's Word is truth (Jn. 17:17).
 - b. The truth we are to place around our waist is God's Word.

- c. God's Word helps keep win over temptation.
 - 1) "Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You" (Ps. 119:11).
 - 2) Jesus fought off Satan's temptations by answering, "It is written" (Mt. 4:1-11).
 - d. If we are to win over Satan's attacks, we must know the Scriptures.
 - 1) We must study God's word so we know what it teaches.
 - 2) We must meditate on God's Word so we can apply it to our lives.
 - e. Have you applied the belt of truth?
- E. We are to put on the breastplate of righteousness, v. 14.
- 1. A soldier's breastplate covered his body from the neck to the thighs; it was primarily used to protect the heart.
 - 2. Our breastplate is righteousness.
 - a. "Righteousness" refers to right living.
 - 1) We are to "awake to righteousness and do not sin" (1 Cor. 15:34).
 - 2) Timothy was told to pursue "righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness" (1 Tm 6:11).
 - b. If we are to please God, we must do what is right.
- F. On our feet, we are to wear "the preparation of the gospel of peace."
- 1. In the Roman army, sandals were a sign of readiness.
 - a. A soldier's wearing sandals meant he was ready to march and do battle.
 - b. Roman sandals were made with nails that gripped the ground so the soldier could have sure footing.
 - 2. We must be prepared to teach the Gospel.
 - a. Before Jesus ascended to heaven, he told his disciples, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Mt. 28:19).
 - b. "Always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you" (1 Pet. 3:15).
 - c. Are you ready to share your faith?
- G. We are to take the shield of faith, v. 16.
- 1. This refers to the great oblong shield carried by the soldier to protect him from flaming darts.
 - 2. This shield is to be the shield of faith.
 - a. We are to be individuals of faith--we are to be individuals who trust God.
 - b. If we are to please God, we must have faith.
 - 1) The work of God is to believe in the One God sent (Jn. 6:29).
 - 2) We to draw near to God with a "true heart in full assurance of faith" (Heb. 10:22).
 - 3) One cannot please God if we lack faith (Heb. 11:6).
 - 3. With this shield, we will be able to "quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one."
 - a. In ancient combat, arrows would be dipped in pitch or some other combustible material and set on fire.
 - b. Satan sends many flaming darts toward us.
 - 1) He sends temptations all day long.
 - 2) We must use our faith to overcome these temptations.
- H. We are to wear the helmet of salvation, v. 17.
- 1. In ancient combat, the helmet was made from thick leather or brass and was used to protect the soldier from fatal blows to his head.
 - 2. In combat, the head is very important, for the head was what allowed the soldier to wage war—it was where he developed his strategy.
 - 3. Our heads are important, too.
 - 4. Our helmet is to be our salvation.
 - a. "Salvation" here is our knowledge and hope of salvation.
 - b. Knowing we are saved keeps our thoughts on Christ instead of the things of this world.
 - 5. Do you wear the helmet of salvation?
- I. We are to take the sword of the Spirit, v. 17.
- 1. This sword is the Word the Spirit has given us.
 - 2. He has given us the Word of God.
 - 3. Just as the belt of truth referred to using the Bible to combat Satan's attacks, the sword we have is the Bible.
 - a. Paul isn't being redundant here.

- b. Rather, he is emphasizing just how important Scripture is in defeating Satan.
- 4. Do you use this sword in battle?

PRAYING IN THE ARMOR, vv 18-20

- A. Once we have on our armor, we need to pray.
- B. We to pray always with prayer and supplication, v. 18.
 - 1. The Lord expects his people to have an attitude of prayer.
 - a. "Pray without ceasing" (1 Th. 5:17).
 - b. "Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving" (Col. 4:2).
 - c. Are you a praying person?
 - 2. We are to be watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.
 - a. We are to pray for our brethren around the world.
 - b. They face the same enemy we face--Satan.
- C. We are to pray for those who preach, vv. 19-20.
 - 1. Paul asks the Ephesian Christians to pray for him that he might preach God's word boldly.
 - a. The Word of God often offends individuals.
 - b. It is tempting for the preacher to stay away from controversy, yet we must proclaim God's word faithfully.
 - 2. Because Paul spoke boldly, he was in prison.
 - a. Paul wished to continue speaking boldly for God.
 - b. Boldly is the only way one should preach.

CONCLUSION

- A. Put on the Christian armor and use it in your fight against Satan.
- B. Are you wearing the Christians armor